



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION

STAFF PRESENT

LORI MASSA, *SENIOR PLANNER*
ETHAN LAY-SLEEPER, *PLANNER*

MEMBERS PRESENT

DEBORAH FENNICK, *CHAIR*
TANYA PAGLIA
SARAH RADDING
FRANK VALDES

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS and MINUTES**

The City of Somerville Design Review Committee held a public meeting on **Thursday, October 15, 2015**, at **6:45 p.m.** at City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room, 93 Highland Avenue. Somerville, MA 02143.

The purpose of the meeting was to review and make recommendations on the following proposals:

220 Washington Street

Description: The DRC reviewed materials for the proposed development at 220 Washington Street with respect to the façade color, membrane roof system, HVAC equipment, and potential application of art to the façade. The Project was presented by the City of Somerville Capital Projects Director, and Planning Director.

The DRC made the following recommendations on the design.

- The architect should investigate what types of colors are available for the hardy board planking and provide several options in either red or grey to determine which fits best with the existing structure, and would still work with the eventual repurposing of the modular structure in another context.
- The architect should investigate the benefits of black or white membrane roofing
- The architect should investigate whether the HVAC units can be moved to the rear of the structure
- The architect should investigate the potential for incorporating a super graphic and or mural on one façade of the structure relating to the future planning efforts on the project site.

The Applicant will investigate the design suggestions and review changes with Planning Staff.

400-406 Mystic Avenue

Description: The DRC reviewed materials for the proposed development at 400-406 Mystic Avenue with respect to the general use, massing and style proposed, though this was difficult as the architect did not provide sufficient materials for a thorough review.

The DRC made the following recommendations on the design.

- The DRC requested that the architect submit a site plan.
- The DRC requested that the architect submit a neighborhood context plan.
- The DRC would like to understand how the site is accessed by vehicular traffic.
- The DRC requested that the architect submit a landscape plan.
- The DRC indicated that the 'community room' at grade on Mystic Ave. will not be used and is not an appropriate use of frontage in that area.
- The DRC requested that commercial space be added on the ground level.
- The DRC requested that underground parking, or recessed parking, be incorporated in the design, and that the level of soil removal for each option be explicitly addressed.
- The DRC asked for the garage entry to be redesigned to be more sensitive to the adjacent neighborhood and pedestrian activity and potentially relocated based on the difficulty of access from Grant Street.
- The rear balconies may be problematic and inappropriate given the height the building and its proximity (16') to the adjacent neighborhood.
- The four-story height may be more appropriate along Mystic Ave. rather than stepped back closer to the neighborhood.
- The DRC indicated that the current version of the design is cluttered with nonsensical ornamental 'doodads', completely ignoring the context and character of Somerville as well as the fundamental principles of architectural detail, structure and massing.
- The previous version of the design was better, in that the DRC felt they could actually engage in a dialogue about it with the architect.

The Applicant will incorporate the design suggestions, address each comment, and schedule another meeting with the Design Review Committee.